

In addition to the AmeriCorps scholarship program we announced at the service summit, last year we took additional steps to encourage our young people to serve in their communities while in high school. We said we would offer \$500 scholarships to high school juniors and seniors with the best record of service in their class if their communities and private service organizations would match that amount.

Just a year later, I am proud to say that some of our Nation's most prominent service organizations have answered that call. Today I'm pleased to announce that 1,600 high school students—some of whom are standing with me today—will receive scholarships of up to \$1,000 to help pay for college. The American Legion, the Kiwanis Club, the Rotary Club, the Elks Club, the Lions Club, the Junior Leagues, and the Miss America Foundations, these are community groups that are the glue that hold America together. And now they're giving our young people another reason to give something back to our communities.

This is just the first year of the national service scholars program. I know that next year it will be even bigger. Our goal is to make this program available in every high school, so that every high school principal in America can stand before a graduating class and announce the name of a national service scholar. And with the support of groups like those who have already committed to help, I am confident we can make it happen.

Something very important to our Nation occurred at the Presidents' service summit. There, people from all walks of life looked beyond their differences and came together around the common goal of serving our country, to give all our young people a chance to have a better life. This is the way we have to meet our challenges: business, working together with government and labor, religious and community groups joining forces, people lending a hand to help one another. Today we take another important step to build on that progress.

The spirit of the service summit is stronger than ever, and it's up to us, all of us, to keep it alive as we move forward together into a new century.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 2:02 p.m. on July 25 in the East Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on July 26. In his remarks the President referred to Gen. Colin L. Powell, USA (ret.), former Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Opening Remarks at the Lake Tahoe Presidential Forum in Incline Village, Nevada

July 26, 1997

Thank you very much. First of all, ladies and gentlemen, I want to thank all of you who had anything to do with these efforts in working with us over the last several months. The members of the Cabinet and the Deputy Secretaries have been acknowledged. The Members of the Congress have been acknowledged. The other distinguished State officials from California and Nevada have been acknowledged. But there are a lot of people who work for these Federal agencies at other levels who have just been out here killing themselves for the last few months to try to make this a good, successful 2 days. And to all the citizens who worked with them and to all the Federal employees who are here, I want to thank all of you for what you did to help these last 2 days be successful. In addition, there are four people who worked with us to help make these workshops and this forum a success: Katie McGinty, Jim Lyons, Tom Tuchmann, Phil Bayles. I can't count—six—Jeff Bailey and Dave Van Note. And I want to thank them.

I want to say a special word of appreciation to the Members of Congress from these two States who have proved that this is a bipartisan, perhaps even a nonpartisan endeavor, that we all have a stake, not just as Westerners, but as Americans, in not only preserving Lake Tahoe but, if possible, reversing some of the difficulties of the last 2 years.

But I would be remiss if I did not say a special word of thanks to the person who thought this idea up and got my commitment months ago—months ago—to show up, if you'll forgive me, come hell or high water. And here we are in the middle of the budget negotiations we're trying to finish today back in Washington, but I am here because I

promised Harry Reid months ago I would be here. *[Applause]* Thank you.

I also want to thank the people who took us out on the boat today and who do all this wonderful research here and everybody who took the Vice President around yesterday. You know, I got up at 5 o'clock in the morning my time, 2 o'clock your time, to come here today, and I ought to be tired, but I'm exhilarated, partly because of the beauty of the surroundings. And I always—on the few times in my life I've been privileged to be at this great site, I've always been exhilarated by it.

The other reason I am pumped up is that when I saw the Vice President this morning, he was virtually glowing, and I knew he had been here in his element. *[Laughter]* And the minute we got on the boat, I got my Marine Biology 101 lecture—*[laughter]*—about phosphorous, nitrogen, what does what, what does the other. I looked at the plankton. I mean, I could pass anybody's test now. *[Laughter]* And you have made Al Gore a happy man. *[Laughter]* He thinks that he is a—this may be one of the deepest lakes in the world, but he's just about 6 inches below heaven right now. *[Laughter]*

Let me say that the first stewards of this land, of course, were the Washoe people. They tell us that Lake Tahoe was the product of the Good Spirit's benevolent hand. They've also treated it that way. Perhaps now more and more Americans and more and more citizens of the world are tending to look at our environment that way. I certainly hope so. When Washoe families came to the lake each spring, they blessed the water and shared its bounty. And when they left their campsites each winter, they hardly left a track behind. Today, it appears to me that all those who are involved in this great endeavor revere this region and have worked hard to keep it safe from harm.

Your cooperation to protect Lake Tahoe is, frankly, as the Vice President said, an outstanding model for the work we have to do to protect all kinds of national treasures and deal with all kinds of environmental challenges in the new century. And if I could be quite candid here, one of the reasons that I wanted to come here was not only to highlight to the Nation the importance of Lake

Tahoe but also to show the Nation that there is a place where environmentalists and business people and ordinary citizens, where Republicans and Democrats, where tribal leaders and governmental people, where everybody is working together in common cause recognizing that there cannot be an artificial dividing line between preserving our natural heritage and growing our economy. That is the fundamental lesson as Americans we have to absorb if we hope to be able to have our grandchildren and our grandchildren's grandchildren 100 years from now celebrating the kind of country we're celebrating on the edge of this new century. So you are doing something important for the country.

As all of you know, the Vice President and I got to go out on the UC Davis research vessel this morning to see how the scientists monitor the lake's clarity and quality, and we also learned just how not only pristine Lake Tahoe still is but how much it has degraded over the last 40 years or so. We could see from measurable evidence and the charts that are tacked up inside the vessel, what we have to do to reverse the decline.

We also have gotten the message in the workshops the Vice President has described. Over the last 2 months, I think it's astonishing that more than a thousand people have participated in these workshops. I believe this is the seventh such meeting—I think that's accurate. And for all of those 1,000 people plus, I want to thank you because the announcements that will be made today and the work that will be done in the months and years ahead is in no small measure the direct result of your willingness to give your time to participate in this process.

We learned that all of us have to find even better ways to work together. And I think you know that just a few moments ago, I signed an Executive order to ensure greater cooperation among all the governments, agencies, and businesses working here. It's not a top-down Federal mandate but a pledge to collaborate and share resources more than ever. We will work with you, we will support you, but you—the States, the tribes, the local citizens—you will lead the way. The Executive order simply embodies the ratification of our obligation to help and to support.

The workshops also convinced us that the Federal Government must take new actions now to help protect Lake Tahoe's environment and, with it, the area's economy and quality of life. Today, with real projects based on listening to local people, we commit to take more than 25 specific actions and more than double the Federal Government's investment in the basin in each of the next 2 years to well over \$50 million.

Among the things that we intend to do are, first, to expand our efforts to restore the forest and reduce the risk of catastrophic fires. The Forest Service will use prescribed fire and other means to clean out the dry brush and wood on more than 3,500 federally owned lots and 3,000 acres of open forest each year.

Second, we'll take steps to protect and restore the lake's fabled water quality. We will work with UC Davis to develop computer tools that can predict how various watershed improvements will contribute to water quality. Every Federal agency here will work to increase efforts to restore natural habitat, reduce erosion, and keep the water clean. One crucial measure we'll work hard to deliver is a new pipeline to carry waste water out of the Tahoe Basin. And I thank all the Members who have supported that, but I particularly want to recognize the efforts of Senator Boxer and Congressmen Fazio and Doolittle.

Third, we will help to cut down on traffic congestion and auto pollution by joining with you to improve mass transit throughout the region. I'm pleased to report that the U.S. Postal Service will help by switching to cleaner natural gas trucks and expanding home mail delivery to people on the west side of the lake. The Sierra Nevada's legendary 19th century mail carrier Snowshoe Thompson would probably be proud of that. *[Laughter]*

And let me say, if I might do a little home cooking here, there are natural gas buses manufactured in Chattanooga, Tennessee, now being sold all over the world, now in use in the rainforest in Costa Rica, that would be very good for reducing air pollution around the lake. *[Laughter]* And I know someone who would be helpful in getting you in touch with the appropriate people.

Finally, the Vice President met with Washoe elders yesterday and announced that

we will assist the tribe in their efforts to protect sacred areas and preserve their culture. The Forest Service intends to provide approximately 350 acres of forest to the Washoe for use in growing traditional plants and another section of land where the Washoe will establish a cultural center. As part of this action, the Forest Service intends to provide tribal members access to the water's edge for the first time in a century. I learned today from their leader that the Washoe first wrote to the President of the United States asking for help on these matters in 1877. It just took 120 years, but I can tell you, from now on, the mail will run more rapidly between Lake Tahoe and Washington, DC.

We hope to do more beyond today's announcement as we work with leaders from California and Nevada and Lake Tahoe's many friends in Congress. I also want to recognize the efforts of Governor Miller, Governor Wilson earlier this week in recommending their States' resources to the lake—recommitting their States' resources to the lake. I'm convinced we can succeed in this endeavor. And as I said before, I'm convinced, as we do, the model of cooperation you have established will be a model that we'll want to follow throughout the country.

We have a lot of work to do today to preserve the pristine Headwaters Forest in northern California, something of great concern I know to Senator Feinstein and many others; to restore the Florida Everglades; to protect the endangered Sterling Forest in the Northeast; to save Yellowstone from gold mining. We have an awful lot of work to do, I think, in perhaps our biggest challenge of all, in confronting the challenge of global climate change as we move into a new century.

President Theodore Roosevelt said, standing not far from here, "We are not building this country of ours for a day. It is to last through the ages." Well, as we approach the 21st century and deal with these huge megachallenges like climate change, you have given us a way to meet the challenge of the ages, by working together and understanding what our forebears knew centuries ago. We cannot divide our quest for prosperity from our obligation to hand nature, God's great gift to us, on down to the generations. We

can do that. You have shown us the way. And we are determined to do our part.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:55 a.m. at the Hyatt Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to the following forum staff: Tom Tuchmann, Department of Agriculture Western Director and Special Assistant to the Secretary of Agriculture; Phil Bayles, Deputy Director of Public Affairs, Forest Service Pacific Southwest Region; Jeff Bailey; and Dave Van Note. He also referred to Governors Bob Miller of Nevada and Pete Wilson of California.

Closing Remarks at the Lake Tahoe Presidential Forum in Incline Village July 26, 1997

Let me say, first of all, again I'd like to thank Senator Reid for getting my commitment to do this. When I was a boy, I grew up in a town that permitted me to grow up next to a national park, next to a national forest, in a community surrounded by three lakes, one of which was virtually destroyed. I feel like I have been through a lot of these things, and I feel very much at home here.

And the second thing I'd like to do once more is to thank the Vice President for all he's done to sensitize me about these issues and to educate me. I made a joke about it earlier, but it's not funny; it's true. The third thing I'd like to do is to say to all of you, I leave here basically with three different conclusions or commitments in my own mind. One is the one that Senator Feinstein and Mr. Upton and Governor Miller and others, Congressman Fazio pressed home, is we don't have an unlimited amount of time; we have to keep intensifying our efforts. You have done more than anyone could ever have expected you to do, and we have to do our part. So I got the message, and we'll stay after it.

The second point again I want to reiterate is that you have done something here which, if we can properly publicize it, will help your Nation very much, because you have proved that you can bring all these people together and demolish the false choice between the environment and the economy. And that's very important, because there are lots of other places we have to do it and issues that

affect local communities, the Nation as whole, and in some cases, our entire globe.

The final thing I'd like to leave you with is that you have also proved that there is a way of doing things that makes community-based solutions work, to go back to the Congressman's point. Community-based solutions only work when people come together, agree on a common goal, share values, and are willing to give up a little of their own turf in order to work together to a common goal.

But I ask you to compare—compare just for a moment—if you want to appreciate the significance of what you are achieving here, compare what you have done—look at this group just sitting around here today—with the fact that in Bosnia today we can't even get the parties to agree on what their currency will look like, that we just recently got reinstituted a cease-fire in Northern Ireland for people who are fighting over things that happened 600 years ago that the young college students would like to let go of and their elders won't let them.

Now, I mean, I don't want to—I'm not overdramatizing this. Mature societies, to preserve our life on this globe, when we're going to have a global economy, a global society, and a global environment, are going to have to be able to find community-based ways of bringing shared values and common cause together and overcoming false choices, like education and the environment—I mean the economy and the environment—and also overcoming past divisions.

And this is a mark of the kind of society it will take to preserve America's greatness for the next 100 years in a lot of ways. How, for example, can we have—we believed that we could reduce the budget deficit and increase our investment in education. Everybody said it couldn't be done; we did it. We believed that we could reduce the size of Government and, in the Vice President's terms, make it cost less and do more. There are 300,000 fewer people working for the Federal Government, but we're far more active—look here, today—in many important areas than we ever were before.

We have to be able to get these false dividing lines out of our minds and the idea that we have to fight with each other if we're dif-